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ABSTRACT

A report is given on a program of fellowships, administered by the Council for Basic Education, for independent study in the humanities by high school teachers. Major and supplementary funding for the fellowships is provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Esther A. and Joseph Klingenstein Fund, Inc. Chapters are presented on: (1) governing precepts; (2) standards and requirements for candidates; (3) study plans; (4) applicant recommendation requirements; (5) review of applications; (6) administration; and (7) fellows. A fact sheet, with condensed information about the fellowship, is appended along with suggestions for making the most of the fellowships. (CB)

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Council For Basic Education

RENEWAL AND RECOGNITION OF TEACHERS:

FELLOWSHIPS FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

A report from the Council for Basic Education
on Professional Development

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RENEWAL AND RECOGNITION OF TEACHERS:

FELLOWSHIPS FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

A report from the Council for Basic Education on Professional Development

A report from the Council for Basic Education, from its files, with the assistance of James M. Banner, Jr., senior research associate of the Council.

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A. Graham Down, *Executive Director*

Since its founding in 1956, the Council for Basic Education has grown into a nationwide association of parents, educators, policymakers, and other citizens who are committed to strengthening the teaching and learning of the liberal arts in elementary and secondary schools. The basic disciplines are: English (including reading and literature, writing and reasoning, and speaking and listening), mathematics, science, history, geography, government, foreign languages, and the arts.

The Council believes that the paramount goal of schools should be children's academic learning. All students, regardless of background or vocational goals, can and should master the basic subjects to prepare for responsible citizenship, to earn a livelihood, and to develop the capacity for life-long learning.

From its headquarters in Washington, D.C., the staff of the Council offers informational services and nationwide professional development programs for teachers and administrators.

The National Endowment for the Humanities is an independent federal agency established by Congress in 1965 to initiate and support research, scholarship, education, and general audience programs in the humanities. Projects sponsored by the Endowment's Division of Educational Programs attempt to strengthen instruction principally through teacher training in the disciplines of the humanities. The Endowment does not support projects that are concerned primarily with education theory or technique, or with educational research, school management, child development, or the acquisition of basic skills.

The purpose of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is to aid and promote such religious, charitable, scientific, literary, and educational purposes as may be in the furtherance of the public welfare or tend to promote the well-doing or well-being of mankind. The Foundation makes grants to institutions in education; in cultural affairs and the performing arts; in medical, public health, and population education and research; and in certain areas of conservation, natural resources, the environment, and public affairs.

The program is also supported by The Esther A. and Joseph Klingenstein Fund, Inc.

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A Statement of Purpose

This is a report on a program of fellowships for independent study in the humanities for high school teachers. In existence since 1983, the fellowships have been administered by the Council for Basic Education under a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, with supplementary funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and The Esther A. and Joseph Klingenstein Fund, Inc.

The Council believes that news of the program merits wide circulation and hopes that this report will encourage the inauguration of similar efforts elsewhere, under local auspices, with support from other sources.

Although the humanities in the schools need special attention, similar programs need not be restricted only to subjects of the humanities. This program is limited to the humanities in part because of the particular sources of its support and in part from the conviction that incentives for study in the humanities were not increasing to the same extent as those for study in mathematics and the sciences. There is no reason, however, why analogous programs cannot be established, for example, in mathematics or science. The principles and administrative procedures described here are equally applicable to ventures in all the liberal arts.

During the first three years of the program, fellowships for Independent Study in the Humanities have been awarded to a total of 370 teachers of humanities subjects in grades 9 through 12 in public and private schools throughout the country. A fellowship frees a teacher to devote two summer months to full-time study in a topic of the teacher's choosing. The fellowships carry a stipend of $2,800, plus $200 payable to the fellow's school library for the purchase of books of use to students and teachers in the area of the fellow's study.

The program was founded on the proposition, all too rarely accepted or acted upon, that students' learning is directly related to teachers' knowledge. Therefore, opportunities for teachers to gain and deepen their knowledge and thus their vitality as teachers must be provided. Nevertheless, few if any schools offer such opportunities. Professional development programs and sabbatical leave policies rarely encourage serious, professional, intellectual endeavor and sustained study in a field of learning.

The Council for Basic Education decided to create the fellowships to encourage, reward, and celebrate learning in a field of knowledge rather than to provide still another incentive for the production of lesson plans or film strips or the addition to a transcript of yet more courses in educational administration or counseling or the study of pedagogy or educational technology. The Council has no illusion that a program of such modest scale as this one can reverse the tides of educational practice, nor does it claim that teachers' attention to curriculum development, teaching skills, and student life is not important. It believes, however, that now is the time—long past the time—to reaffirm the venerable basis of all education: the accumulation of knowledge by instructed minds. From their outset, therefore, the fellowships set forth to nourish the intellectual life of the schools by improving teachers' knowledge of their subjects.

The principle that teaching is arid without ceaseless learning lies at the foundation of all instruction, no less in schools than in universities, where the custom of summer study is well established. Yet teachers themselves, as well as those who are supposed to offer leadership to them, often fail to understand that this self-nourishment—one's own learning—is essential to the richness of instruction. This is so in all subjects.

In contrast to the sciences, where learning frequently proceeds through cooperative effort, most study in the humanities is independent. It takes place alone. And its product is usually the distinctive product of a single mind reflecting on existing evidence and on written and other texts. Yet most school teachers in subjects of the humanities have had little experience in studying and seeking knowledge without the company of others. Therefore, in the conviction that the independent pursuit of knowledge is fundamental to teachers' life-long intellectual and professional growth—and no where more so than in the humanities—the Council has sought to offer teachers the chance to develop the essential capacity of self-directed learning.

What has been stunning, and often inspiring during the first three years of the Council's fellowships has been the

desire of many teachers, despite their being out of practice, gladly to learn so that they might gladly teach. By providing recognition and reward to highly motivated, inquisitive, experienced teachers, this program has also sought to emphasize the importance of the humanities in a balanced school curriculum. In an era of careerism, the riches of reflective thought, wide knowledge, the wisdom of the past, and an understanding of other people and cultures are held at a discount. As a result, the school curriculum has been pulled out of shape, and too many students leave school with only fragments of knowledge in the humanities. Through fellowships for searching, energetic teachers, the Council for Basic Education and those who have so generously backed its efforts have attempted to invigorate those who teach in the humanities and to alert others to the epicentral place of the humanities in the schooling of our youth. What follows is an account of the fellowship program and of the many elements that have made it a success.

Governing Precepts

Basic to the Fellowships for Independent Study in the Humanities have been three professional precepts: competition, peer review, and multiple accountability. Their influence has permeated all aspects of the program.

A competition among aspirants for a limited number of fellowships was made necessary chiefly by limits on the supporting funds. During its first year, 1,000 applications were received for 100 places; in 1984, 1,100 applicants sought one of 120 awards; in 1985, 1,500 people competed for 150 fellowships, which will continue to be the number of annual awards. Clearly a large reservoir of potential applicants for a program of this sort exists. A competitive application process has proven that there are many more deserving candidates than the program has had funds to support.

Yet competition has other, equally important benefits, both to applicants and to those who manage the program. The knowledge that they will be vying with others for awards prompts applicants to submit a strongly conceived and justified study plan; and since applicants are not barred from applying repeatedly until they are once successful, competition encourages the improvement of previously unsuccessful applications. It also lends to the awards the aspect of greater worth and honor by their having been won in an anonymous contest of merit with others.

The competitive nature of the fellowships is also advantageous to the program's management. Especially during the first two years, the need to decide among many deserving applications of roughly similar strength forced those who reviewed applications and selected fellows to clarify the criteria they used in choosing award-winners. The refinement of standards also benefited future applicants in that guidelines for applications and study plans were revised for greater clarity and precision.

The second fundamental precept—that of peer review—is a necessary professional corollary of competition. It assumes—through the multiple, anonymous, neutral readings of all applications by professional colleagues—the legitimacy of a program and the authority of its awards. In this case, because the applications of some 450 finalists are read at least six times by two different groups of reviewers and subjected to two additional technical reviews, the element of personal and professional bias or favoritism is held to the very minimum. Peer review also gives each award the implied imprimatur of professional colleagues.

Peer review is one element in a complex system of accountability, the third precept by which the program is governed. In addition, each fellow is accountable to the Council for the use of the fellowship under the terms proposed in the fellow's plan of study; for the expenditure of $200 toward the purchase of books for the school library; and for the submission of a report at the conclusion of the fellowship.

Study plans lead applicants to formulate projects and justify their contents. Fellows are expected to abide by their plans and to carry them out. Often proving to be too ambitious, some study plans must be cut back. Occasionally, they cannot fully be pursued (owing, for example, to the sudden unavailability of scholarly resources). In such instances, fellows obtain the Council's approval of a change.

Fellows are accountable to the Council, too, for the purchase of $200 worth of books for their school libraries. They are expected to select books of value to students and colleagues in their field of study and to report to the Council on the expenditure of these funds for books.

As a kind of informal mechanism of accountability, the Council has also found it useful to survey by phone roughly one-third of the fellows each summer at some time prior to the submission of their final reports. During the summer of 1983, the Council called them mid-way through the fellowship term; during 1984, it phoned a sample of fellows in September, subsequent to the end of their fellowships. In both instances, the Council sought to discover, while fellows' experiences and memories were fresh, any difficulties that they were facing and to gain a sense of their involvement in, and reaction to, their fellowship work. In both cases, the interviewer submitted an informal report of the survey of findings that proved useful in refining the guidelines for the program and its administration in the following year.

Fellows must also account for the fellowships through the submission of a report of their study and activities by early autumn following the end of the fellowship term.

Fellows have used these reports to reflect upon their work and its contribution to their knowledge. They have also taken the occasion to review pitfalls they have encountered, to suggest changes in the fellowship program, to explain modest deviations in their study plans, and to describe any further study or related professional activity that they plan to undertake.

The fellows are accountable for their work in two other respects. An announcement of their fellowships is distributed by news releases to nation-wide press services and to their own communities, and the Council publishes a directory of fellows which lists study topics and addresses and telephone numbers. Thus, fellows are often approached to describe the program and to explain their involvement in it. Furthermore, the Council expects fellows to respond to a survey questionnaire about the effects upon them of their fellowships, which is disseminated in the autumn a year after the completion of their fellowship terms.

Fellows have one additional obligation to the Council after the end of their fellowship. By accepting an award, they agree to serve as readers of the study plans of future applicants in subsequent competitions. Not all previous fellows are called upon to do so, to the disappointment of many. Yet those who have contributed their time have greatly benefited the Council and enhanced the strength and integrity of these competitions, while at the same time finding great pleasure and satisfaction in the task.

Standards and Requirements for Candidates

The rules of eligibility for the program were designed to designate a target group of teachers who, in the Council's estimation, could best benefit from an extended period of self-directed reading and reflection. It was therefore necessary to delineate carefully the criteria for applicants and to develop standards for selection, standards that would pertain especially to the applicant's plan of study.

Although the fruits of independent study ideally should be available to all school teachers from the elementary and secondary grades, given the limited resources it seemed more practicable to offer a small, select fellowship competition to those whose teaching responsibilities fell primarily within single subjects in distinct fields within the humanities—that is, teachers in grades nine through twelve. The Council also believed it essential that applicants be experienced enough in the classroom to have a seasoned understanding of their own intellectual bent and to be able to distinguish between their own interests and the perceived needs of their students. Although the eligibility requirements have not been fully successful by themselves in recruiting only these kinds of teachers to the competition, they have achieved most of the original ends in view.

The eligibility requirements have been as follows:

1) Applicants must have completed five years of full-time paid teaching in grades nine through twelve in American schools, of which 60 percent must have been in subjects of the humanities as defined by the legislation that established the National Endowment for the Humanities. This requirement seeks, by attracting *experienced* humanities classroom instructors, to build upon proven professional strengths, not to offer remediation or retraining.

2) Applicants must hold a master's degree (not restricted to a field of the humanities); or to possess the equivalent of a master's degree as defined by the applicant's school for purposes of certification and salary; or to have completed enough courses for credit in the humanities to have the equivalent of a master's degree. The purpose of this requirement is to attract those who have already demonstrated a capacity to further themselves professionally.

3) Applicants must also teach in grades nine through twelve and be teaching 60 percent of their schedule, both in the year of application and in that following a fellowship, in a field of the humanities. This requirement is meant to concentrate the fellowship program on teachers whose primary occupation is in humanities classrooms.

4) Applicants must be under contract for full-time teaching in an American school or a U.S. school abroad for the current year and the subsequent academic year. This requirement excludes participation in the program by those in part-time status or in transition to non-teaching duties.

5) Applicants must expect to be in the classroom for at least five more years. Although it is impossible to prevent such unanticipated eventualities as sudden alterations in career plans or early retirements, this requirement seeks to have the fruits of a fellowship extend for more than a brief period in a fellow's teaching career.

6) Applicants must be American citizens or foreign nationals with at least three years of American residence immediately preceding a fellowship term. This requirement reflects provisions of federal statutes governing the National Endowment for the Humanities.

7) Applicants must also demonstrate their capacity for independent study by providing evidence of previous accomplishments and the certification of the applicant's school principal. This criterion has been difficult to apply, because evidence of a teacher's ability to learn without the assistance of others is hard to adduce. Such evidence varies from field to field, person to person. Some principals themselves may not possess a clear understanding of the meaning and nature of independent study. What is more, some principals may be willing to certify applicants' capacity without themselves seeking evidence of it. Therefore, the determination of an applicant's abilities to learn independently has often been left to the fallible judgement of selection panelists, working from the limited evidence before them.

8) Finally, so as to allow the broadest distribution of the program's resources, those who have previously won a fellowship in this competition are ineligible for a second award.

Study Plans

The centerpiece of an application and the fellowship itself is the study plan. Because it is the part of an application given the greatest weight by initial reviewers and the selection panel, directions for its preparation are critically important. The study plan should present a clear design of the project; the justification for its pursuit; strong evidence, not of the candidate's aspirations, but of the candidate's knowledge and experience; an explanation of the means by which the study plan will be carried out; the anticipated benefits of the study to the fellow; and a description of its timetable.

As the Council has learned from experience, it is difficult to write instructions that adequately assist applicants in submitting the strongest plan. It has therefore been necessary to make them more specific. In the process, the Council has clarified its own objectives and, through experience, decided what are and are not desirable or acceptable as forms of independent study.

For instance, many early applicants for fellowships in the field of foreign languages sought support for foreign travel, justifying their study plans on the assumption that exposure to a foreign culture itself increases knowledge. Many that survived the first round of evaluations struck members of the final selection panel as weaker than the others because travel was being offered as a surrogate for study. The panel's discussions, pursued to develop consistent criteria of judgement, led the Council, in guidelines for the following year, to require applicants to demonstrate that any travel would enrich, not replace, study. In the same vein, seminars, interviews, and field visits are now required to be supportive of study and not substitutes for it.

One of the unanticipated results of refining and tightening the guidelines for foreign language study plans has been a decline in the number of applications in the category. Many, if not most, foreign language teachers, it seems, believe that foreign travel is the most desirable source of increased knowledge of foreign cultures and of improved skills in reading, writing, and teaching another language. Though not choosing to dispute this belief, the Council has decided to make no exceptions to its general purpose and to insist that fellowships in foreign languages, like those in other fields of the humanities, be primarily for the *study* of language and culture and not for the *experience* of them.

No matter the clarity or specificity of guidelines, and despite a steady improvement in the quality of study plans, some problems continue. The most frequent of these concerns the plan of reading. In the first round of applications, few submitted reading plans; broad claims and vagueness characterized many proposals. As a result, a list of likely readings to be studied was strongly solicited. As expected, applicants in the second round had more carefully thought out their reading. Reading lists, often developed in consultation with university professors or other experts, were stronger and more specific. Plans were therefore more focused, more professional, although a certain number of applicants simply submit a reading list without making it part of a fully developed and coherent plan of study. Not surprisingly, these gains now entail two new snares for applicants. Being more specific, the reading lists can be more easily challenged. In addition, being more extensive, study plans often propose readings unrealistically ambitious. For these reasons, selection panelists are now encouraged both to evaluate plans for their general strengths and intentions and to suggest ways in which the reading lists might be improved. These comments are then forwarded to those who win fellowships.

Another frequently-encountered problem with study plans is applicants' difficulty in reflecting on the benefits they expect to receive from a fellowship. Many emphasize the advantage they envision for their students and schools; many have trouble describing the concrete and specific ends they seek to achieve and instead write of general or global objectives. Yet the Council considers this requirement of the study plan important, not only for the information about each applicant which it elicits, but also for the encouragement it gives them to focus on learning as self-enrichment—about which they have too little experience and confidence although it is central to the program.

Related to this portion of the plan is a separate requirement that applicants describe the skills, achievements, and

professional activities germane to their applications. Here, too, some applicants appear diffident, others list the irrelevant, and a few probably discover that they have not involved themselves widely in the world of education and related activities. Nevertheless, this section of the application provides information about the applicants that is essential for judging their capacity to benefit from an award and to carry to completion their proposed projects.

Recommendations

The application requires the submission of two independent evaluations or recommendations, one from the applicant's principal, the second from a colleague, or a current or former supervisor, or a former student no longer in the applicant's school. The Council has found that, in soliciting independent evaluations of applicants' abilities and promise, it must be specific about the qualities of the applicants that it wishes evaluated, lest the recommendations be vague and thus of little use. Therefore, it asks the two independent evaluators to assess the applicant's classroom performance and to provide evidence of the applicant's capacity for independent study. In addition, the Council asks the principal for evidence of the applicant's previous accomplishments that show initiative, self-discipline, unsupervised carry-through, intellectual curiosity, and related qualities.

However, even with these guidelines, evaluations have often been lacking in specific evidence. Worse still, recommendations from principals are frequently matter-of-fact, or they reveal slim acquaintance with applicants and their work. Few principals mention a candidate's limitations and other offsetting strengths. Not that the defects of these evaluations are peculiar to this program; they are characteristic of too many recommendations in all competitions. Yet principals' evaluations in particular have proven to be less useful and more difficult to weigh than desired and anticipated. The result is that, in judging applications, more consideration has been given to the study plans.

Review of Applications

Every application passes through a two-stage sequence of review prior to the final round in which winners are selected. This process assures the greatest possible uniformity of evaluations in a competition for scarce fellowships.

The first stage of review is technical. In the case of this program, the Council contracted with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, New Jersey to distribute, receive, and register all applications, to prepare them for submission to initial reviewers and the selection panel, and to maintain computerized data related to them. Upon receipt of applications, the staff of ETS screens each one against a checklist for its having met the program's formal requirements for completeness, for the inclusion of the two required letters of recommendation, and for the submission of a study plan. Questionable applications are set aside for review by the fellowship staff. Frequently, an applicant's submission will include supporting documents and exhibits. Because of the large number of applications and because of the need to ensure the fairness of the competition, these unsolicited materials are removed from the application prior to its dispatch to the outside readers. This practice is explained in the application brochure.

The review by former fellows and other educators constitutes the first substantive evaluation of applications and the second stage of the process. During the program's first year, outside readers were recruited with the assistance of the program's advisory committee. Since then, reviewers have been selected primarily from among previous fellows. Each receives copies of the study plans of roughly 50 applicants. Each application is rated by four readers, two of whom are expert in the proposed field of study.

Reviewers are provided with a number of questions to be used in evaluating the study plans. In addition to basic matters (for example, whether the proposed topic falls within the humanities, whether it assures independent study extending for eight weeks), these questions lead readers to consider a plan's feasibility, the quality and justification of the readings, the plan's potential for increasing the applicant's knowledge in the humanities, and the relevance of such ancillary activities as travel, interviews, and the like. Each reviewer is asked to rate each study plan on a scale of 1 (the lowest) to 4 (the highest). (A scale of five categories was discarded out of concern that some reviewers would hesitate to make a decision between low and high categories and simply give an application a score of three—i.e., the mid-point between 1 and 5.) In order to reduce the effects of idiosyncratic readings, the lowest of the four scores is dropped, and the remaining three are combined to produce a composite score. (Plusses and minusses are not permitted.) The roughly 450 study plans that achieve the highest composite scores then become finalists. At this point, an application has a one-in-three chance of being awarded a fellowship, since the selection panel may pick roughly 150 of the strongest applications.

For its selection panel, the Council gathers a group of ten people, some of whom are academic scholars from the fields of the humanities, while others are school teachers or administrators. This mixture has proven critically important. Each group on the panel brings to the process distinctive perspectives and strengths. The representatives of the schools have educated the scholars about the realities of the teachers' work lives and have been able to compare strong and weak applications with the work of teachers of their acquaintance. The academic members have brought expert knowledge of their disciplines and a sense of the feasibility of some projects and the intellectual merits of others. Where the panel members from the schools have proven best able to assess the significance of projects for teachers, the panel members from the scholarly community have been best able to evaluate the merits of study plans. Both have been essential.

Panel members have, in each of the three instances so far, convened for three full eight-hour days. The panelists read complete applications, including the biographical sheet that contains information about the teachers' background and professional careers, the study plan, and the two letters of recommendations. They do not see the ratings of the initial reviewers. Panel members, like initial reviewers, excuse themselves when they happen to know an applicant, come from an applicant's school or school district, or otherwise might not be able to assess an application objectively.

The applications are divided in such a way that each re-

ceives at least two separate readings in the final round, usually by a school panelist and academic panelist from the same field of study. (In the case of applications in less populous fields, such as archeology or music history, reading by experts in the field cannot be guaranteed.) The applications receive two separate scores on the same 1-through-4 scale used by the initial reviewers. Those with the highest composite scores then usually win a fellowship. Any two readings that result in scores that are not contiguous (in such combinations as 1 and 3, 1 and 4, or 2 and 4) receive a third independent reading to resolve the lack of agreement.

Panel members may write comments on their rating sheets. Should an application require special discussion by panel members, the comments are available to assist panelists' recollections. In addition, some comments may be used by staff members in suggesting modest study plan revisions (such as the inclusion of a work to a reading list or the exclusion of a particular line of inquiry) to fellowship winners.

The final stage of the selection process consists in an administrative review of each application. The Council retains the authority to reject an application recommended by the selection panel when the application turns out to be defective for technical reasons—such as when, in rare cases, the staff judges an application to fall outside the fields of the humanities. Very few are rejected on these grounds. The staff must also verify some applicants' statements, such as a declaration at the time of submission that an applicant has completed all requirements for the masters' degree, and substantiate some claims about degree equivalencies. Once these technical matters are seen to, those confirmed are notified of their fellowships.

Administration

If the key to the promise of fellowships has been the quality of the study plans, the key to the realization of the program has been its professional administration. It cannot be stressed too strongly that the integrity of any program like this and its legitimacy among teachers depends upon the timely, consistent, efficient, and responsible management of its various parts. What follows in this section of the report is a record of how the Council met this challenge.

Advisory Committee. No administrative structure or plan of activities can be created until a program's general objectives and the standards governing its operations have been decided. To assist in all phases of program policy and administration, the Council created an advisory committee of representatives from five educational organizations.* Committee members helped refine initial fellowship guidelines, requirements, and selection procedures and helped recruit people who served as initial readers of applications during the program's first year. Since 1983, the committee has met two or three times a year and continues to function as an important sounding-board and closely-associated monitor of the program. Among its continuing activities, it has assisted in the development of policy, suggested administrative procedures, aided in public relations, and recommended potential members of the selection panel.

Staff. Another essential component of the program's administration has been professional staffing. The program's scale and complexity have required the involvement of a program director, whose principal responsibilities (in addition to other senior responsibilities in the Council) include general policymaking; a program manager, who has major responsibility for the program's day-to-day activities; and a part-time secretary. Any fellowship program will require the appointment of at least one professional if it is to be successfully administered.

Technical Support. The Council had to decide early whether it would process all applications itself or contract with another agency to provide the necessary administrative support. It chose the second alternative because a service organization promised to have capacities and facilities which could speed the processing of applications and the keeping of records. The Council therefore solicited bids and selected the Educational Testing Service to provide technical support. The role of ETS has included processing requests for information and applications; mailing, receiving, and logging applications; maintaining computerized records of each competition; copying materials and preparing files for evaluation by the initial reviewers and the selection panel; printing and mailing notification letters; and storing records of the program. In no instance was ETS involved in policymaking activities.

It is not clear that the employment of a service agency is essential to the successful functioning of similar programs, as opposed to providing "in-house" technical support. What is clear from the Council's experience, however, is the need for adequate staffing and automated records to ensure efficient and timely responses to all application requests, to meet all parts of the schedule established at the outset, and to keep careful track of statistics on the applicants and fellows.

Promotion. Once the basic administrative structure of the program had been established and the basic procedures had been set, it was necessary to promote the program. Teachers had to be made aware of a unique source of fellowship support. Schools had to be alerted to a new opportunity for their faculty members' continued professional development. The professional and general public had to learn of an endeavor to invigorate teachers' knowledge and to strengthen instruction in the humanities.

Initially, due in large part to the inauguration of the program late in an academic year, the Council had to rely for

*American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Council for the Social Studies, National Council of Teachers of English.

publicity upon news releases (which might or might not give rise to news stories), complimentary advertisements in professional journals and magazines read by school teachers and administrators, and word of mouth. In the second year, with the assistance of increased funding, the Council was able to undertake a targeted campaign of letters—2300 of them to the superintendents and principals of large urban school districts—in addition to the kinds of publicity used before. As a result of these efforts, more than 1,000 teachers applied to the program during each of its first two years, and the Council responded to over 3500 inquiries each year. As the program entered its third year, added funding enabled the Council to conduct even more extensive promotional activities, including letters and flyers to most high schools in the nation, to chief state school officers, to state humanities councils, to members of the Council of Great City Schools, and to affiliates of the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers. In addition, intensive efforts have been made to secure both paid advertisements and news stories in newspapers and major education publications.

Promotion cannot be too greatly stressed. Upon it depends the number and quality of applications. Broader and more intensive efforts during the third year—plus, no doubt, mounting knowledge of the program itself—resulted in a 50 percent increase in applications—to 1500—and a rise in the number of applications from public schools, especially those in urban and rural locations.

Inquiries. Requests for information and applications generate the largest amount of mail and require prompt response. In fact, it has proven essential to have staff members who are fully informed about the program and who can respond promptly, by phone or mail, to all queries. Not that all requests for application packets or all inquiries result in completed applications. The ETS handles the receipt of routine requests and questions and mails all application packages. But all questionable applications, any special situations, and all letters requiring personal answers are forwarded to the Council for response. The Council answers them immediately.

The Council receives inquiries from potential applicants, school administrators, members of the press, and many others. Most questions concern eligibility, the suitability and contents of study plans, the nature of independent study, and the program's ban on the use of fellowships for producing some tangible curricular product, such as lesson plans or classroom exercises, during the eight-week term of study. Some have inquired about the subjects that are encompassed within the humanities, since some schools classify the performing arts within the humanities—which, since they are excluded by the National Endowment for the Humanities from disciplines eligible for its support, cannot receive support under this program.

Selection. Upon the submission of applications and the arrival of the deadline date, the peer review process commences. Although the evaluation of applications by initial reviewers takes place by mail, it has proven necessary that a Council staff member carefully superintend the process, since reviewers telephone with questions, run into unavoidable obstacles in completing their work on time, and—most important—report conflicts of interest when asked to review the study plan of a colleague or close friend. In this last case, the study plan is mailed back to the Council, which must then recruit another reader.

The administration of the selection panel is equally important. This panel meets each year for three eight-hour days. The morning of the first day is devoted to orientation and to standardization exercises designed to familiarize panelists with procedures and evaluation criteria. The Council's practice has been to select ten applications, two or three each from English, foreign languages, history, and another field. Each panelist reads and rates and then discusses each sample application in turn. These exercises, commonly used in analogous evaluation situations, have proven to create reasonably similar ratings derived from similar grounds. They do not, and cannot, prevent different judgements about the merits of the same application. They do, however, result in rough agreement on the standards by which study plans and other parts of the applications are to be measured. (The orientation session is supplemented during the three days by occasional, brief sessions to discuss issues as they arise and to solve any especially complex problem with an application.)

Notification. Once selection has been completed and the staff has checked each successful application for technical problems (such as whether courses claimed as equivalents of a master's degree have yet been completed), those who have won awards and those who have not must be notified promptly (Summer plans depend on the news). Fellows are sent a letter of award, along with a copy of the regulations governing the award and a letter of agreement, signifying their acceptance of the rules. This agreement must be signed and returned before the stipend is sent. In order to increase recognition of the fellow's award, a copy of the notification letter is also sent to the fellow's school principal. A personalized letter is mailed to the principal following the teacher's official acceptance of the award.

Candidates whose applications have not been chosen also receive a letter, sent at the same time, notifying them that they have not received a fellowship. Both as a professional courtesy and as an aid to those who might reapply to the program, a description of the characteristics of successful applications is sent upon request.

Fellows Packages. Following the receipt of letters of agreement from new fellows, the Council sends a package of materials to each fellow. Included are the fellow's sti-

pend of $2800 (the $200 check for the purchase of books is sent directly to the principal); a letter of introduction to help the fellow gain access to otherwise restricted libraries, museums, etc.; an outline for the final report due in September; guidelines for purchasing the books for the school library; a description of the service expected of the fellow if asked to be an initial reviewer of study plans in future competitions; an award certificate; and a digest of the experiences and suggestions offered by past fellows.

The suggestions from past fellows are intended to help fellows make the most of their study. Three areas of potential trouble spots are identified: problems innate to studying independently; outside nuisances that may hinder the fellow in carrying out the study plan; and personal distractions that all scholars experience. Each category identifies potential problems and offers suggestions for avoiding them.

Assessments. The management of the program has also included a number of different assessments. In addition to the fellows' candid reports of their own work and their views of the program and its distinct elements, the Council has had the benefit of four other kinds of evaluation.

Once during each summer it has phoned roughly one-third of the fellows in order to pick up any signs of general problems and to identify the need for any refinements in future program brochures and application forms. In the two instances so far, the person who conducted the survey has submitted a report that details his findings and that has offered suggestions for modest alterations in the program's administration.

In the second place, the Council has employed a consultant to analyze the fellows' final reports. He, too, assessed the contents of the reports, summarized any recommendations for the program's improvement that they have contained, and proposed alterations to strengthen the program's management.

Third, the program has benefited from the participation of the advisory committee and the selection panel, members of which have provided continuing review of all aspects of the program.

Finally, after the conclusion of the program's second year, the Council employed the services of a professional survey analyst to make a comprehensive assessment, using social science methods, of the results of the fellowships. Based upon a mail questionnaire to all 1984 fellows, to a sample of 1983 fellows, and to some disappointed applicants, as well as upon some telephone interviews and case studies, this assessment has become the basis of a formal report to the Council.

Fellows

Nothing marks the search for knowledge in the humanities more than the individuality of its pursuit. With rare exceptions, people who do history or pursue literary studies or interpret philosophy carry out their work alone. They bring to their inquiries the distinctiveness of their interests, intentions, and aims. They conclude their work with an understanding or with views that are wholly their own, not likely to be possessed in just the same way by anyone else.

If college professors in the humanities experience loneliness and sometimes have difficulty prosecuting their solitary studies, teachers of the humanities in secondary schools face probably greater difficulties. Typically, they have little experience in studying alone—without the spurs of seminars, assignment, and advisors. They also have few incentives to pursue additional knowledge of a subject at all, for the schools tend not to reward the search for knowledge. Finally, because study aims at the enrichment of self, teachers—accustomed to fashioning knowledge into a unit, module, or lesson plan—may see little benefit in new knowledge if they gain no immediate, practical, or pedagogical advantage.

In trying to accommodate these realities, the Council attempts to explain the meaning of independent study. As defined by the Council, independent study is taken to be "self-directed reading undertaken to acquire a body of knowledge." This definition purposefully excludes scholarly research of the type leading to a doctoral degree. Applicants and fellows are allowed, indeed encouraged, to seek the assistance of scholars, colleagues, librarians, and others in designing their plan of study. But they are expected to pursue their study "in conformity to their own intellectual purpose and spirit and principally on their own." This means that, during the term of a fellowship, they may not enroll in summer school full-time, undertake their work as part of a team, or join in other formally structured and collegial activity.

Behind the definition lies the principle of accountability as a professional. No standard lies closer to the heart of a program of independent study, and none has proved harder to clarify. Repeatedly, applicants have expressed uncertainty as to what independence means and incredulity that fellows are trusted and compensated to learn with the sole purpose of enriching their own knowledge. Fellows report anxiety about their ability to carry out extended study on their own; they complain about the lack of companions along the way; and they exult when they can finally meet the expectations of independence.

These sentiments reveal the fragile professional self-regard of many teachers. Some of them have never pursued independent study before, their undergraduate study or M.A. seminars having typically entailed group discussions and frequent faculty counsel. Many, in fact, have not *studied* at all since their collegiate days. Many have not sought further exposure to the content of their fields: they have little encouragement from school administrators; they need to supplement their incomes in the summer rather than to engage in unpaid study; they do not think of themselves as members of the world of knowledge. The Council is not confident that is has done more than stimulate an interest among those teachers who already possess confidence, energy, and venturesomeness to apply to the program. How to reach those of strong potential who do not view themselves as candidates for fellowships is a puzzle that has not been solved.

Throughout its brief history, the program has attracted the attention of teachers who aspire to greater knowledge, even if they do not fully understand the meaning and demands of self-directed reading and reflection. The enthusiasm of those who have applied has been palpable. The gratification of those who have won fellowships has been boundless. Their own words capture their spirit. "I greatly enjoyed the freedom and the leisure to work at my own pace." "It greatly enriched my knowledge." "I loved it!" "It was the nicest summer I've had since I was a kid." "A new world was opened to me." "Next to getting married and having children, it was the best thing that ever happened to me." "All in all, it was one of the most remarkable and satisfying summers of my life." "I never worked so hard for $3,000 in my life."

What are the principal benefits of fellowships, as reported by their recipients? They included "rejuvenation," "better communication with my students." One said that he

"found out how little I know," another that the fellowship "put an end to academic weakness of many years' standing." It allowed one "once again to take myself seriously as a student rather than as a teacher." Others reported "greater reflectiveness," "closer reading," "much more enthusiasm about content," and increased "appetite for more knowledge."

Fellows' enthusiasm and the renewal and satisfaction they gain from their studies do not mask the disabilities that so many aspirants bring to their inquiries and applications. These are not the disabilities—the lack of "competence" or "credits"—that are so often these days remarked upon in critiques of American schooling. They are rather the disabilities of perception, the costs of incentives and rewards having for so long gone to everything but study.

For instance, schools normally set aside time for workshops and courses that lead to pedagogical and curricular change but not to fundamental intellectual enrichment. As a result, applicants to the program believe that they must come up with a product, be it a lesson plan, or a bibliography, or a new course, or a slide show, in order to justify their study plan. They are astonished when told that a product is precisely what the program will *not* support during the eight weeks devoted to study. Part of their surprise stems from the selflessness that undergirds the best teaching, the conviction that everything must be bent toward the immediate benefit of students. The corollary of this commitment, however, can be the absence in teachers of a serious concern for themselves as thinkers, as people of authority in their subjects, as intellectuals. They are less likely to bear in mind the advantage to their students of the intellectual regeneration of themselves.

Whether they never possessed this self-image or whether it has been altered by the institutions in which they work is difficult to say. Yet the condition is revealed in many ways. Too many applicants have little notion of the scholarship that has preceded what they wish to study, the learning that has been accumulated. They may therefore propose a list of obsolete readings or seem to have no notion of where to find current bibliographies; others may be ill-acquainted with the journals in their field.

The profiles of two fellows may help to illustrate the differences between a fellowship that has fulfilled its promise and one that has not. The profiles may also show the ways in which experience, perception, and intention interact to assist or to hinder teachers in their independent pursuit of knowledge. The profiles are drawn from the experiences of real fellows to form two composites and are based upon information about, reports from, and interviews with fellows over a two-year period. They are meant to draw sharp distinctions. Many, if not most, of the actual experiences of fellows have fallen between these two divergent cases.

The first concerns a teacher who has taught ninth- and tenth-grade history for 20 years. His responsibilities require four or five preparations a day in as many as three different historical subjects. Over the years, he has developed and taught, both alone and as part of a teaching team, an interdisciplinary course in the humanities for college-bound students. No stranger to solid intellectual enrichment, he is pursuing a master's degree in history and doing so by studying subjects of history in which he does not usually teach.

The project for which he was granted a fellowship was the study of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe. He believed that his knowledge of this field was too skimpy, and he proposed to offset his deficiencies with study of primary and secondary texts. He worked entirely at home for roughly seven hours each day, borrowing books from local libraries. He amended his original reading list with the addition of two major eighteenth-century texts, which many of the day's leading figures had read. Like all fellows, he reported a new-found sense of confidence and the boost to both his knowledge and status as a result of the fellowship award.

Yet both his final report and the results of interviews with him suggest that he was not prepared to benefit fully from his study opportunities. He did not have a clear idea, despite the strengths of his initial application, about how to undertake study in early modern Europe and seems, like a number of fellows contacted in the middle of their summer's work, to have gotten bogged down in single texts. He could not describe clearly the contents of the books he had read nor to distinguish their contributions to his knowledge. Somehow his new knowledge seemed, in his description of it, to vindicate his long-held but somewhat outmoded views of the subject rather than to have broadened them. Although many of the works he read included full coverage of the period's art, he never visited the great collections of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century paintings in the city of his residence. He did not take many notes for later use, although in speaking enthusiastically about his work he justified it on the grounds of its prospective direct contributions to his classroom plans.

It seems therefore that this fellow was not, in fact, prepared for self-directed study of the sort envisaged by the program. Highly motivated, a skilled teacher, he was nevertheless without sufficient experience in independent reading and reflection and hence had difficulty absorbing new knowledge gained on his own. In addition, he did not possess an understanding of study as self-enrichment, without reference to classroom application. He would probably have benefited more from study as part of a seminar group under the guidance of a senior scholar and with the spur of frequent accountability in the form of reports and papers.

This fellow's study contrasts sharply with that of another who applied to read German literature. A junior- and senior-high school teacher for 13 years with a master's degree, her specialty is European and Russian poetry and fiction. However, she is primarily responsible for teaching an eleventh- and twelfth-grade course that combines history and literature and which has many attributes of a college course—lectures, readings, group seminars, and written essays.

She sought a fellowship in order to buttress her knowledge of central European literature, especially of the modern German novel. Although concerned to keep a faithful record of her work for classroom purposes—her notes included plot summaries, descriptions of characters, and references to passages for analysis in class—she sought to immerse herself in the field. Reading for roughly six hours a day at home, she did not hesitate to expand her original reading list and to seek out secondary works to assist her. She also forced herself to read novels that it turned out she did not enjoy. Although she believes she might have benefited from an occasional tutorial or from conversations with others working in the same subject, she would not have been attracted to a formal course out of a disinclination to read from a syllabus prepared by someone else.

In this instance, the fellow seemed to know precisely what she wished to learn, how to learn it, and what to do with her new knowledge. Because of her background in the broader subject, she knew of the relevant scholarly studies. If anything, as her determination to plough through literature that gave her little satisfaction suggests, her study under the fellowship may have been somewhat too structured. A greater flexibility and a willingness to let the study unfold as it progressed might have made her work even more enjoyable and enriching.

Fellows' experiences such as these indicate the difficulty of predicting which applicants will use their fellowship to greatest benefit and which are the best prepared to do so. In order to help teachers learn to study autonomously while addressing the oft-expressed anxieties about working in comparative isolation, the Council has strengthened its assistance to fellows. It encourages applicants to seek the aid of others—nearby college faculty members, experts in applicants' proposed areas of study, or other scholars—in the preparation of their study plans. The Council hopes thereby that overly ambitious study plans can be avoided; that irrelevant, weak, or obsolete readings will be put aside; and that the best strategy for completing an intensive study of a subject will be devised. For those who win fellowships, the possibility of access to a temporary "mentor" should reduce somewhat the sense of isolation that accompanies a fellowship. It may also strengthen the professional links between school teachers and their fellow professionals on college and university campuses.

In addition, the Council will reach every fellow, not just some of them, by phone at least once during the summer. In the past, fellows were encouraged to phone the Council for any assistance they might need, but few did so. The Council believes that individual phone calls will not only reduce fellows' sense of isolation but that they will give encouragement to the faint-hearted, solve modest problems that fellows may have encountered, and offer the further opportunity to recognize the fellows' work.

As a way of notifying fellows of the projects of others as well as publicizing the fellowships, the Council publishes a directory of all fellows and their projects. Many teachers have expressed thanks for such a directory, often with a desire to contact others for advice, information, and support. The Council believes that the directory helps to create a sense of professional community and esteem among current and former fellows and provides a useful resource for all teachers.

The Council also publicizes the fellows through news releases mailed to a local newspaper selected by each fellow, state humanities councils, state teacher organizations, chief state school officers, major U.S. newspapers, radio and television stations, and federal and state policymakers. Letters urge the principals of winners to honor the fellows in their school districts.

Conclusion

As a result of the fellowship program, schools have been awakened to the fact that a national organization, with backing from a federal agency and two major foundations, considers the humanities to be a central part of the intellectual life of the schools. Teachers, whose often lonely voices in behalf of the humanities have gone unheard and unheeded, have found that they have allies elsewhere. Teachers, even those disappointed in their applications for fellowships, have been strengthened in their dedication and, with new recognition, have gained in dignity and status as professionals; they have emerged as more confident voices for balanced curricula and the liberal arts. But most important has been the effect on individual fellows themselves.

The intellectual gains anticipated at the program's inception have all been realized. The fellows' interest in the life of the mind has been rekindled. The knowledge of subjects of their own choosing has been deepened. Their ability to seek knowledge on their own has grown. Their capacity to participate in the larger community of learning has expanded. They can now—and now do, as made evident in their reports to the Council and in independent analyses of the program—think of themselves as *students*, some for the first time, in a field of the humanities.

Yet the benefits to fellows' attitudes, professional bearing, and professional spirit, not clearly foreseen at the inauguration of the program, have been equally important. As attested by their own evaluations, fellows' confidence as thinkers has been reinstated and as professionals has been reinvigorated. "It was critical," one fellow remarked, "that someone thought it important enough to support school teachers." They have more verve in the classroom, speak with greater authority to students and colleagues, bear proudly the title of "humanities fellow." They have rediscovered the joy of learning. And they are better able to convey that joy to their students.

Nothing better testifies to the benefits of a fellowship than the following words from a fellow:

> As corny and phony as this sounds, I first thought your letter announcing that I had won an award was a mistake. And then I started crying. Not because I needed the money (though I did). Nor because I wanted the prestige (though I am glad of it). But because after ten years in a much-maligned profession that I chose and that I love, I had begun to fear that the only way up was out—into administration, into state level jobs, into textbook writing—but out of the classroom. It hasn't been a thankless job. Students return. Parents call. If I were a better English teacher, I could find the words to express how much this grant meant to me. It was recognition for those ten years of hard work, but it was also an affirmation of my need to learn and my need to teach. It was someone saying, "Yes, teaching is important." I can take college courses any time, but this grant was for teaching. It was the teacher's chance to teach herself, and I am proud of the job I did. How could I leave the classroom now?

Together, such gains to fellows' minds and spirits amply justify this initiative to quicken the humanities in the schools. The Council for Basic Education hopes that others will recognize the benefits of similar programs in the fundamental subjects of the liberal arts, will endeavor to design and support them, and will thus contribute to the strengthening of American schools.

Appendix

The following "**Fact Sheet**" can be distributed in response to requests for information.

Background and Purpose

In 1982, the Council for Basic Education (CBE) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) joined forces to establish the Fellowship Program for Independent Study in the Humanities. The purpose of the program is to provide study opportunities for teachers of the humanities in grades 9–12. The first 98 fellowships were awarded in 1983, 118 were awarded in 1984, and 151 were awarded in 1985. Grants from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and The Esther A. and Joseph Klingenstein Fund, Inc. have made it possible to increase the number of fellowships and extend the program. With additional support from the Endowment, approximately 150 fellowships per year will be awarded through 1987.

The program assumes, first, that the quality of students' learning depends largely on the quality of teaching in the classroom and, second, that even superior teachers need opportunities for concentrated study to revitalize their daily teaching.

Therefore, the principal purpose of this program is to encourage serious independent study in the humanities by individual teachers and, by improving teachers' knowledge of their subjects, to nourish the intellectual life of schools.

The fellowships serve other purposes as well. By recognizing and rewarding superior teachers of the humanities, they help schools retain the better teachers and sustain excellence. They also emphasize the importance of the humanities as essential elements of a balanced curriculum in the liberal arts.

The Fellowship Program

The fellowships enable selected teachers to engage in eight weeks of concentrated independent study and thereby to expand their knowledge in areas of the humanities that are of special interest to them.

"Independent study" means self-directed reading and reflection undertaken to acquire knowledge. Fellows may seek the assistance of established scholars or teachers in designing and carrying out their plan of study; however, fellows are expected to pursue their work in conformity to their own intellectual purpose and principally on their own. Travel, courses, interviewing, etc. may only augment the independent study, not substitute for it.

Each fellowship provides an award of $3,000. The fellow receives a stipend of $2,800 and the fellow's school library receives $200 for the purchase of books that will be of value to students and colleagues. Fellows must complete eight weeks of full-time independent study between June 1 and August 31, 1986, and may not engage in any other paid employment during the period of study. Submission of a final report to CBE is required. Fellows will be asked to respond to a follow-up survey to assist the Council for Basic Education in evaluating the program.

An important part of the program is the participation of former fellows in the initial process of reviewing applicants' study plans in the year following their term. Fellows must therefore be willing to serve up to 20 hours for this purpose during January and February 1987. (Fellows review study plans in their homes.)

The fellowships are not intended to fulfill degree requirements; consequently, no arrangements have been made to award academic credits or units of professional credit.

Council for Basic Education

Since its founding in 1956, the Council for Basic Education has grown into a nationwide association of parents, educators, policymakers, and other citizens who are committed to strengthening the teaching and learning of the liberal arts in elementary and secondary schools. The basic disciplines are: English (including reading and literature, writing and reasoning, and speaking and listening), mathematics, science, history, geography, government, foreign languages, and the arts.

The Council believes that the paramount goal of schools should be children's academic learning. All students,

regardless of background or vocational goals, can and should master the basic generative subjects to prepare for responsible citizenship, to earn a livelihood, and to develop the capacity for life-long learning.

From its headquarters in Washington, D.C., the staff of the Council offers informational services and operational programs.

National Endowment for the Humanities

The National Endowment for the Humanities was established by Congress "to initiate and support . . . programs to strengthen . . . teaching . . . in the humanities." The Endowment does not support projects that are concerned primarily with education theory or technique, or with educational research, school management, child development, or the acquisition of basic skills; rather, the Endowment uses elementary and secondary education grants from the Division of Education Programs to improve teaching and curriculum in the humanities disciplines.

In the bill creating the Endowment, Congress said, "the term humanities includes, but is not limited to, the study of the following:

- language • history • archaeology
- linguistics • jurisprudence • comparative religion
- literature • philosophy • ethics
- the history, criticism, [and] theory . . . of the arts
- those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic method
- and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment, with particular attention to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life."

Application

1. The **Biographical Information** requires biographical data including teaching experience, educational background, and professional activities and achievements.
2. The proposed study plan must be described using the form headed **Independent Study Plan**. Study must fall within the subjects of the humanities as defined by the National Endowment for the Humanities and must be related to the applicant's teaching field or anticipated teaching assignments.
3. Two **Evaluations** are required. One must be completed by the applicant's current principal. The second evaluation may be completed by a colleague, a current or former supervisor, or a former student no longer in the school.

Conditions of Eligibility

Full-time classroom teachers may apply if they:

- have completed at least five years of full-time paid teaching with at least three-fifths of their schedule in the humanities disciplines (as defined by NEH) in grades 9–12 in U.S. schools (including U.S. schools abroad);
- hold a master's degree, hold the equivalent of a master's degree (as defined by their school for the purposes of certification and salary), or have completed enough graduate courses in the humanities to have the equivalent of a master's degree;
- teach in grades 9–12 with at least three-fifths of their schedule in English, foreign languages, history, or another humanities discipline (as defined by NEH) during 1985–86 and 1986–87;*
- are or will be under contract to teach full-time in a U.S. school (including those abroad) for the 1986–87 academic year;
- plan to teach at least five more years;
- are United States citizens or nationals or foreign nationals resident in the United States or its territories for at least three years immediately preceding the time of application;
- have the capacity for independent study as demonstrated by previous accomplishments and as certified by the school principal; and
- have not previously been awarded a fellowship for Independent Study in the Humanities.

Questions of eligibility should be referred to the Council for Basic Education, c/o Independent Study in the Humanities, CN6331, Princeton, NJ 08541-6331.

*Junior high teachers are eligible if at least 60 percent of their teaching load is in the 9th grade and in the humanities.

The Study Plan

The study plan is the most important part of the selection process and therefore of the application. Please read the following guidelines carefully.

The main purpose of the Fellowships for Independent Study in the Humanities is to give teachers an opportunity to increase their knowledge in the humanities. The program is governed by the conviction that students benefit most from teachers who are learned, who possess a mastery of a body of knowledge, and who are consequently better able to transmit the value and excitement of learning. Therefore, it is important to understand that unlike other study opportunities that may be available for teachers, a fellowship for Independent Study in the Humanities is not intended to be used for investigating pedagogy, classroom

management, or educational technology, for producing new curricular materials, or for developing publications. Although lesson plans, teaching aids, etc. may subsequently be developed, the eight-week fellowship term should be devoted to the rigorous pursuit of ideas and knowledge.

Study plans are judged by reviewers on their merits and feasibility. A strong plan for study will:

- demonstrate that the applicant will increase his or her knowledge of the humanities through the study;
- present evidence that the plan has been well-thought-out;
- answer the questions: what, how, and why does the applicant intend to study;
- provide a rationale for the design of the plan, an explanation of how the study will benefit the teacher, a description of the planned activities, and a timetable for study;
- be as specific as possible, including a plan for readings to be pursued;
- answer likely questions about the feasibility of the plan;
- show any necessary travel, seminars, courses, visits, and interviews as supportive of study and not as a replacement for it; and
- provide evidence of reading knowledge in the appropriate languages for all plans that entail readings in languages other than English.

The program is intended to support independent study; therefore, team projects cannot be considered.

Applicants who find travel necessary must provide evidence of the feasibility of travel abroad in sometimes inaccessible areas (e.g., Eastern Europe, China).

Only one study plan may be submitted by each applicant. No time during the study period may be allotted to writing a final study report or to completing the follow-up survey.

Please read carefully the description of the study areas allowed (and the activities not supported) by the law establishing the National Endowment for the Humanities. All questions of eligibility of subject areas should be referred to the Council for Basic Education, c/o Independent Study in the Humanities, CN6331, Princeton, NJ 08541-6331.

Selection Process

The selection of fellows will be a two-stage process.

Since the study plan will be the primary component of an applicant's file, the first stage of review will be limited to an evaluation of study plans. Applications with top-rated plans will be selected as finalists and forwarded to a selection panel.

In the second stage of selection, the entire application will be reviewed with heaviest consideration again being given to the study plan. The supporting material (biographical data and evaluations) will be reviewed for indications of the candidate's demonstrated capacity for independent study and the candidate's performance as a classroom teacher. The selection panel will be looking for evidence of initiative, self-discipline, intellectual curiosity, and potential for independent completion of the planned study.

Queries

For further information and applications write to;

Council for Basic Education
c/o Independent Study in the Humanities
CN6331
Princeton, NJ 08541-6331

Please, no phone calls.

Important Dates to Know

September 3, 1985	Applications Available	June–August 1986	Independent Study
December 1, 1985	**Deadline for submitting complete applications bearing postmark**	September 1986	Fellowship study report due
		January–February 1987	Fellows evaluate study plans of 1987 applicants
April 4, 1986	Notices of results mailed to all candidates	September 1987	Follow-up evaluation due

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR FELLOWSHIP

Gathered from various individuals closely associated with the program (former fellows, advisory committee members, selection panelists), the following tips should help fellows avoid common pitfalls and have a rewarding experience.

The following information is provided to help you make your fellowship experience as rewarding as possible. Many of the problems and ideas discussed below have been reported by past fellows.

The most important aspect of the program to remember is that the fellowships are intended for your enrichment; your intellectual development is the primary goal of this program. Therefore, no time during the study period should be spent on curriculum development, publishable materials, pedagogy, etc. Former fellows have found, however, that continued work after the study period (for example, in the form of further independent study, conducting and attending seminars, writing articles, or developing curricular materials) can make the fellowship a strong beginning for continuing professional development rather than a brief interlude in a career.

We divide the potential trouble spots into three groups: problems innate to studying independently; outside nuisances that may hinder carrying out the study plan; and personal distractions that scholars often experience.

INNATE PROBLEMS

1. An overly ambitious study plan for the eight-week period.

   This is the most common problem. As you progress with your study plan, if you find there is simply too much to accomplish, we suggest you take the time to review the plan and either reduce or delete less vital areas. Please keep in mind that modifications that significantly change the original study plan do need to be cleared by the fellowship staff.

2. Becoming overwhelmed by the project and losing track of your goals.

   Directly related to #1, this has been another major problem. Independent study, especially if your subject is new to you, can be difficult. Past fellows have recommended three ways to keep on target.

   First, follow leads that develop while studying but be careful to avoid major detours. You may want to investigate newly discovered readings, for example, but it is wise to distinguish those which would be helpful in carrying out this particular plan from those which would be better noted and left to a later time.

   Second, there are times when you will come across material that may be difficult for you to grasp. This is a point when you should consider adding secondary readings to your list. Many fellows have observed that secondary readings helped them get through unfamiliar material.

   Third, and perhaps most important, fellows found it especially useful to identify at the beginning an expert in the field of their study whom they could reach by phone, in person, or through writing. A "mentor" can help a fellow get back on track when lost, answer difficult questions, or provide a much needed outlet for discussion of newly discovered ideas and knowledge.

3. Feeling at the end of the study as though you haven't accomplished much.

   Some past fellows said that despite working very hard they did not feel they had really learned and retained enough. The more successful fellows noted steps they took to avoid this pitfall.

   First, notetaking and writing proved especially valuable. Writing about what you read is a very effective way of learning.

   Second, keeping a log of activities made it easier to chart accomplishments on a weekly basis.

   Third, by establishing a schedule and sticking to it, fellows kept from falling behind in the activities they wanted to accomplish.

   Fourth, and especially important, give yourself plenty of time to reflect on material as you come across it. Scholars often note the importance of setting aside the time necessary to digest new ideas and information.

OUTSIDE NUISANCES

Many of the following problems can be avoided if you work out plans well in advance of the study period.

1. Trouble finding books.

   When ordering books, be sure to allow plenty of time. Fellows often found that it took until the end of the study period to obtain books.

   If you are planning on using libraries, resource centers, etc., be sure they have the books and will reserve them for you.

2. Difficulty getting interviews.

   The problem of getting in touch with people is a recurring problem every summer. The people whom you want to interview may be gone in the summer or may

have plans that will keep them quite busy. Try to set up appointments as soon as possible. Remember also that while interviews may be interesting, they are often not essential to a study plan and it will not hurt to delay them to a later date.

3. Trouble getting into libraries, etc.

   Some fellows experience problems in gaining admittance to restricted libraries, resource centers, etc. We provide a letter of introduction to assist you in gaining admittance. We also suggest that you contact research areas well in advance for permission to use the facility.

PERSONAL DISTRACTIONS

1. Feeling isolated.

   The second most common problem fellows experience is the feeling of isolation. We urge you to use the Directory of Fellows to find a colleague who has been through an experience like yours. Also, talking with local colleagues and mentors has given fellows needed support for discussion of problems, highlights, and questions. CBE will try to call all fellows during the summer as well.

2. Demanding families.

   It will sometimes become difficult to convince your family that you are not free, even though you are working at home. One suggestion for avoiding this problem is to establish office hours and/or an "office space" solely for your study.

3. Lack of support.

   You may also find it disappointing that many of your fellow teachers do not believe that anyone would seriously study when left on their own for eight weeks. It is important to talk with people about your study and what you are accomplishing.

Of course, no fellow is likely to encounter every one of these problems. However, most of you will experience some of them and we hope our advice will help you. If you have any questions or need assistance, please feel free to call the Council for Basic Education.

Good luck!